

To: Press[Press@epa.gov]; Gentile, Laura[Gentile.Laura@epa.gov]
From: David Gray
Sent: Sun 8/23/2015 1:25:38 AM
Subject: CLOSED - AP

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Gray, David" <gray.david@epa.gov>
Date: August 22, 2015 at 7:22:03 PM MDT
To: "Brown, Matthew" <MBrown@ap.org>
Subject: Re: Request

I understand that they were in set up but not complete. I am going to stop short of a final answer pending the ongoing investigation which will tell us what was or was not supposed to happen at the site.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 22, 2015, at 6:51 PM, Brown, Matthew <MBrown@ap.org> wrote:

Have to follow up on this one again-Were impoundments supposed to be completed prior to work that was being done at time of accident?

I'm clear that they weren't in place, but not if they were expected to be in place at time, or at a later date.

Please clarify.

Thanks again for the help today and please pass on same to your source(s) of information. Always helpful to get full story.

Matt Brown

Matthew Brown

Associated Press Correspondent

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From: Gray, David [<mailto:gray.david@epa.gov>]

Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2015 5:13 PM

To: Brown, Matthew

Subject: RE: Request

Hi Matt,

Nancy and David again. The impoundments were not completed at the time of the accidental release.

David

From: Brown, Matthew [<mailto:MBrown@ap.org>]

Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2015 3:46 PM

To: Gray, David

Subject: RE: Request

Thanks David.

Another followup-

The statement of work also mentions work that would be done to control the water within the impoundment and treat it "to prevent an uncontrolled release." Also mentions a temporary water retention and sludge management pond would be in place.

Were those measures put in place prior to the excavation work that led to spill? If not, why not?

Thanks-

Matt Brown

Matthew Brown

Associated Press Correspondent

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From: Gray, David [<mailto:gray.david@epa.gov>]

Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2015 3:04 PM

To: Brown, Matthew

Subject: Request

Hey Matt,

David and Nancy here are more responses.

Could you please provide more details on work to eliminate blockages? Also is there an estimate of how much water remains in the mine? What is potential for another blow out?

EPA's contractor, Environmental Restoration, LLC action and work plan released online yesterday outlines the activities at the site. We do not have an estimate of the amount of water remaining in the mine. Yes, there is a potential for another blow out at the mine.

And regarding documents, it appears EPA was aware of potential for "a blow out of the blockages"; what precautions were taken to account for that?

EPA's Task Order Statement of Work from 6/25/14 identifies our assignment to the contractor to prepare plans to address a release at the mine. It identifies the potential and outlines the necessary steps to address it.

Should more precautions have been taken? Did EPA share that with state officials? Local officials? Were personnel on site when spill occurred aware?

The Department of Interior is conducting an independent review of the release which will determine the adequacy of the activities leading up to the incident. We are not speculating on the findings of this independent review. In addition, EPA is conducting its own internal technical examination of the incident.

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